



A PLEASANT PROSPECT.

Miss Kitty Candour (who has just accepted dear Reggie, and is now taking him fully into her confidence). "I MUST TELL YOU, REGGIE DEAR, THAT THE GREAT FAULT OF MY CHARACTER IS THAT AFTER I HAVE TAKEN ANY RESOLUTION—IT DOESN'T MATTER WHAT IT MAY BE—I ALWAYS BITTERLY REPENT IT!"

PRODUCTION OF MR. JABBERJEE'S PLAY.

(The Author's own narrative—concluded.)

LAST week I left myself about to go before the curtain in obedience to a vociferous request to behold the Author. But, being so transported with joy as not to know—till later—whether I was on heels or head, I fell down several stairs, which occasioned some delay.

Consequently when, in a profuse perspiration, I arrived on the stage, the spectators had already concluded that I preferred to remain as the Great Unknown, and, folding up their tents like the Arabs, had stolen silently away. And the members of the company, so far from felicitating my triumph, were engaged in a heated tittle-tattle and logomachy with Mr. CHESEBOROUGH DUCROW, whom they roundly reproached with having induced them to shell out hard cash to render themselves jesting-stocks in a piece which he must have known was to fizzle out in complete frost.

At this I politely poured oil upon their troubled vinegar by stating that, notwithstanding the niggardliness in scenery department and the incompetency of all the performers to speak what I had set down for them, the play itself had profoundly moved the spectators, as was shown by their hallooing and boo-hooing for the Author at the termination thereof.

Whereupon, to my surprise, they commenced to vituperate myself as an inflated native windbag incapable of writing a

tragedy for nuts, asserting that said boo-hooings were the customary British method of indicating that the performance had not secured golden opinions.

This stirred up my dander to such a degree that I severely upbraided Mr. DUCROW as the *fons et origo malorum*, since it was due to his parsimony that so fine a tragedy had turned out a fiasco, and requesting him to refund all moneys paid as costs of production.

Which Mr. DUCROW declined, lamenting that he should have warmed an Indian serpent with a thankless tooth in his bosom, and maintaining that he was out of pocket by his benevolence, and that, in mere hire of curs for the dogsledges, he had expended at least fifteen bobs.

To his pupils he would merely say that each and all had that afternoon laid the stepping-stone of a brilliant career, and that he was assured of favourable criticisms in such important organs as the *Westbourne Park Morning Express* and *Paddington Evening Mail*.

One of the gentlemen-actors confirmed this, whispering that, to his private knowledge, Mr. *Morning Express* was on terms of sodality and chumminess with the Royal Oak Theatrical proprietor, while Mr. *Evening Mail* was the ardent admirer of Miss TITTENSOR, being a parlour-boarder with her maternal progenitrix.

Had I known all this earlier, I should perhaps have approached both critics in somewhat different style.

Mr. SILLIPHANT predicted that Messrs. *London Times*,

Telegraph and other leading periodicals would jump at such a chance to get their knives into him, and bitterly blamed himself for lowering his reputation as an artist by appearing in so footing a show, while Mr. FITZIN complained that one of the pug-curs had purloined a piece of his leg-calf, and that he should hold me responsible if he ever became a hydrophobic.

And several of the performers declared that they had done with the Dramatic College, causing Mr. DUCROW to reply that they had given him inexpressible relief by resigning, since he was shortly expecting to be engaged to produce a high-class play by a real professional dramatist, whose name he was forbidden to reveal, and that he had had grave doubts whether these particular pupils were sufficiently accomplished masterpieces to be conscientiously recommended for speaking parts. On which they obsequiously withdrew their resignations, and entreated that they might be retained on his good books, after which, perceiving that I was the neglected quantity and odd man out of it, I departed in disgust at the gullibility and conceit of amateurish incompetents.

Next Day.—So far from getting knives into Mr. SILLIPHANT, it seems that the *London Times*, *Telegraph* and other morning dailies have treated yesterday's performance on the silent system of a Sphynx—or is this merely a shocking example of Editorial sleepyheadedness? I have sent out for *Westbourne Park Express* and *Paddington Evening Mail*—and we shall see whether they will prove wider awake. . . .

From *The W. P. Morning Express*.—"A drama entitled *Mr. Frankenstein*, and apparently inspired by the Poet SHELLEY's well-known poem, was performed yesterday afternoon at this popular and *recherché* little playhouse. Although produced for a *matinée* only, it was mounted with all the faultless care and taste which the enterprising lessee has accustomed us to expect from him. Of the piece itself, which we understand is the maiden effort of a gentleman hailing from India's coral strands, it is perhaps kinder, especially as it is not likely to be heard of again, to say nothing. Worse plays have been lived down."

From *The Paddington Evening Mail*.—"Seldom has it been our hard lot to sit out a weirder and more inconsequent piece of pretentious balderdash than the so-called *Tragedy* by an aspiring Indo-Anglian dramatist which was produced, &c. However, if the play possessed no merits of its own, it at least served to introduce a young actress of quite exceptional fascination and intelligence. The name of Miss ENID TITTENSOR is new to us—but we will venture the prediction that ere long she will be shining as a bright particular star in the theatrical firmament. Various other ladies and gentlemen, who have acquired their art under the tuition of that able elocutionist, Mr. CHESEBOROUGH DUCROW, rendered valuable assistance in characters which afforded them no opportunities for distinction, but Miss TITTENSOR, in spite of being evidently hampered by a sense of the absurdity of her part, played as heroine with a distinction and power that showed of what she is capable in a rôle worthy of her remarkable ability. West End Managers will do well to secure Miss ENID TITTENSOR before she is snapped up by some discerning American entrepreneur."

So one-sided a whistle as this is dearly paid for by casting Scottish whisky pegs before such ungrateful swines as *Misters Express and Mail*!

As I do not possess the bottomless *portemonnaie* of a Fortunatus I must now return forthwith willy nilly, with nose in pocket, to my faint afflicted family at Calcutta, and inform them that my mountainous hope has brought forth a bantling of insignificantly mousey proportions! . . .

Later.—Hip-hip-huzza! I am not to be so easily snuffed! I have just received a visit from a highly notorious New York playdealer, who, it seems, has had the curiosity to witness my *Tragedy*, which he is persuaded, if presented with elaborate magnificence and due solemnity before an audience of brainy American citizens, will not improbably tickle them to death!

At first, being apprehensive that he would invite me to stomp up the residuum of my ready money, I was about to politely nill such a proposal, when—who'd have thought it?—he produced certain contract-agreements, in return for signing which he would immediately hand me his cheque for five hundred dollars for advanced royalties!

I of course rejected so inadequate a bribe with the utmost indignation, and, after much chaffering, he consented to double the sum. I have just exchanged his cheque for forty Bank of England five-pound notes—which are very handsome birds in the hand, even if they are not the forerunners of fowls of even finer feathers at present sitting snug in the bush of Futurity.

One last word to Honble British Acting Managers. The time may come, *Misters*, when you will perhaps regret having disdainfully tucked up your noses to snub a splendid Indian swan, when passing *incog.* as the ugly duckling! I have no more to say to you, Gentlemen.

P.S.—Except that a truly magnanimous will never permit the rankling resentment of an injury to affect him in matters of business, and that my Sybilline books are still open to an offer for London rights from any genuinely A 1 quarter, e.g., the National Drury Lane Theatre.—H. B. J.

THE END.

THE STRENUOUS LIFE.

["Dr. STILES, of the United States Agricultural Department, claims to have discovered the germ of laziness."—*Daily Paper.*]

In an age of rush and hurry, when you've scarcely time to tub,
When you shave in twenty seconds and you bolt your morning grub,

When you hurry to the station with a crowd of the profane,
And you scurry through the paper in the early morning train—

In that vile suburban train,

With its freight of human pain,

Where you ruin your digestion and your temper and your brain!—

When you gallop through the morning and have scarcely time to crunch

Half an Abernethy biscuit as you snatch a lightning lunch,
When the after-lunch tobacco you religiously taboo

As you hurry back to business on the very stroke of two—

At that torpid hour of two,

If you've lunched as you should do,

Not a care and not a worry would obtrude itself on you—

In an age when all is whirling in a ceaseless strain and stress
It is good to hear they've lighted on the germ of laziness,
And I hope the worthy Doctor will elect to spend his days
In inoculating people and compelling them to laze—

Ah, if only they would laze,

And amend their horrid ways,

We should see a happy ending of this hurry-scurry craze.

Angry Sportsman (to Irish farmer who has let him a salmon fishery for £100). You may like to know that I have only caught three fish during the whole season. So they cost me £33 6s. 8d. cash a-piece.

Irish Farmer. Faith, 'twas lucky that yer honour did not catch any more at that price!



A DREAM OF ST. PATRICK'S DAY.



THE END OF THE WORLD

QUEER CALLINGS.

III.—THE SOCIAL STATISTICIAN.

"JUST now," said our host, settling himself further in his chair, "my studies are taking me into two very different channels: I am inquiring into cabs and wedding-presents. The idiosyncrasies of persons of eminence who ride in cabs are well worthy of patient investigation in the pursuit of those data by which character is ascertained. It may never have occurred to you that one man rides differently from another; but so it is. Mr. CHAMBERLAIN, for example, when riding alone always sits in the middle of the seat and leans back. Mr. ASQUITH sits in the middle of the seat and leans forward. Lord ROSEBURY, Mr. MORLEY, and Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE subside into the left corner. Sir MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH, Mr. GIBSON BOWLES and Lord HUGH CECIL subside into the right. Sir JOHN GORT folds his arms. The Duke of DEVONSHIRE closes his eyes. Lord SALISBURY forgets his destination. Sir HENRY CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN takes two cabs and runs between them. Mr. WYNDHAM adjusts his moustaches in the glass. Mr. WINSTON CHURCHILL changes places with the driver.

"Then as to methods of payment—these also are full of character. Sir EDWARD GREY pushes the fare through the hole in the roof; Mr. LABOUCHERE pays in new sixpences; Mr. DILLON has an argument with the cabman; Mr. PIERPONT MORGAN asks for discount."

The Statistician paused for breath.

"It is very interesting," we remarked, "and certainly of the highest value. You mentioned wedding presents . . . ?"

"Oh, yes. The investigator has a practically endless field before him there. Take butter dishes. I find that in the last statistical year, closing with February 28, no fewer than 186,371 butter dishes were given away to young persons beginning the battle of life, or an average of 3'008 butter dishes to every cow in the kingdom, and of 7'042 butter dishes to every married couple. What does that teach us?"

"What, indeed!" we echoed with conviction.

He looked wearily at the fire.

"Coal-scuttles," he murmured. "Do you know how many coal-scuttles were presented last year?"

We had no notion.

"The figures," he said, "are remarkable: 49,816. I say coal-scuttles, but some of course were in the shape of cauldrons. Now of these I find that no fewer than 37,353 were given by aunts. Why do aunts give coal-scuttles?" he exclaimed. "It leaves only 12,463 to be divided among other relatives and friends. Why this disproportion?"



The Owner (after five breakdowns and a spill). "ARE Y-OU K-KEEN ON R-RIDING HOME?"

His Friend. "N-OT VERY."

The Owner. "L-LET'S L-LEAVE IT A-AND WALK, S-SHALL WE?"

We were unable to supply a theory. "I think," he said, "I think I have discovered the reason. It seems that there is a growing tendency to call wedding presents by the name of their donors; instead of saying, 'Pass the mustard,' as in our youth, we say, 'Pass Cousin CHARLOTTE'—she having presented the mustard pot to the bride. Now aunts know this: and aunts, I have ascertained, as a rule are vain and want to be remembered. Hence it has come about that they are getting more and more to choose for wedding gifts

articles of solidity and perdurability. A mustard pot is easily mislaid or stolen; an epergne is breakable; a dressing-bag wears out; a butter dish is superseded. But a coal-scuttle goes on, it endures and keeps sweet the name and fame of its giver. Is not that interesting?"

A Dyspeptic Ditty.

I LOVE little lobsters,
Their tint is so warm;
And if I don't eat them
They'll do me no harm.

JOSEPHO AFRICANO.

LIKE Spring that calls the swallow,
With bud and bloom to follow,
For weary hearts and hollow
Piping a winsome strain,
Till tears and laughter choke us,
And tingling veins provoke us
To gambol with the crocus—
You come, you come again!

A prey to pure emotion,
The amorous waves of ocean
Have formed the happy notion
To fleck your cheeks with foam;
The salt sea-winds have kissed you—
How could they well resist you?—
And we, ah we have missed you!
O welcome, welcome home!

What with the *Times* so stirring,
And awkward things occurring,
And hope's prolonged deferring
To make us deadly sick,
So much your voice was needed
To get our motions heeded
That even AUSTEN pleaded,
"O father, do be quick!"

The few your faith relies on
Directed haggard eyes on
The sea's remote horizon
So dim and vast and wet;
And when they heard a blizzard
They trembled in the gizzard,
Saying "It is, it is hard
Luck if he gets upset."

Colleagues, unwont to squander
Their love on you, grew fonder,
And widow-like would ponder
Upon their absent dear;
With every new disaster
Their loving hearts went faster,
Yearning towards the Master—
"If he were only here!"

Now malice, once bedridden
Upon her native midden,
Has washed herself and bidden
The feast your fame has earned,
Who, through a hottish season,
Induced the ranks of treason
To bow to words of reason—
Until your back was turned.

Sedition leagued and banded
You countered single-handed
With lectures strangely candid
And wit supremely deft;
For still your stature rises
Equal to all surprises,
Reaching us many sizes
Larger than when you left!

In wounds that gaped defiance
At merely human science
With god-like self-reliance
You plugged the timely stitch;
You taught the Boar and Lion
To coo like doves in Sion,
And babes to play *I spy* on
The cockatrice's pitch.

Then, touching at Madeira,
You sketched the coming era,
Painting the British sphere a
Profuse and flaming red;
Showed how, by swift inflations,
Soaring above the nations,
We'll knock the constellations
With high impinging head.

Elect of all the ages,
Come, pouch your triumph's wages
By three ascending stages—
Southampton, London, Brum;
Come where our Mayors await you
To puff, and stuff, and fête you,
Dignissime spectatu,
Come, AFRICANE, come! O. S.

PREPARING FOR THE BUDGET.

A ROYAL Mail cart dashed up Downing Street and deposited the Postmaster-General at the door. A minute later the Home Secretary alighted from a police van. "It looks ostentatious," sighed the Premier, as he watched from an upper window, "but if BR-DK-CK will come on a gun-carriage I can't blame the others." He strolled down to the Cabinet Room and airily greeted his colleagues. Then he took his seat at the head of the table, and addressed them.

"Gentlemen, we are here to-day to consider the forthcoming Budget. I think, perhaps, it would make for efficiency—and efficiency is popular—if each of you stated his additional requirements for the coming year. If R-CH-E takes them down on a piece of paper we shall then know precisely where we are."

A murmur of admiration at the Premier's business habits ran round the assembly. The Chancellor of the Exchequer sharpened a pencil and looked round expectantly.

"Ten millions extra," said the War Secretary.

"What for?" snapped the Chancellor.

"To provide four new Army Corps in case of a Continental war."

"Twenty millions more," said the Earl of S-LB-RNE.

"Great heavens!" shouted the Chancellor, "and what do you want it for?"

"To build a fleet to escort BR-DK-CK's Army Corps."

"But they aren't real Army Corps," said the War Secretary in a hurt tone.

"Well, this won't be a real fleet," said the First Lord angrily.

"Hush, gentlemen," said the Premier; "but if neither the Army Corps nor the Fleet are real, do you need real money? I don't think you need put those items down, R-CH-E."

"Two millions extra for the Uganda Railway," said the Foreign Secretary.

"That was finished last year," said the Chancellor.

"Well, I can't help the lions tearing up the permanent way—can I?"

"Of course if they were British lions we must pay. Put it down, R-CH-E."

"I want a million to start the local authorities working the Education Bill," said a youthful voice.

"Who is he?" whispered the Premier to the Chancellor of the Duchy.

"L-NG—Local Government Board—dog muzzler," replied the faithful henchman.

"Quite right—I thought he was a journalist who had slipped in—by all means let him educate his dogs."

"I want £3,492,378 13s. 2d. to improve National Education," said the Marquis of L-ND-ND-RRY.

"What a head for figures! Where did he get it?" said the Premier in an aside.

"In the coal trade," answered the Minister of Agriculture.

"A million for new gaols for aliens, and to provide polyglot warders," said the Home Secretary.

"Anything more?" asked the Premier.

"Two millions to improve the postal services," said the Postmaster General, "and father—I mean the Colonial Secretary—wants twenty millions for South Africa, a million for the West Indies, a million for British Guiana, and half a million for Fiji."

"Put down twenty-four and a-half millions more, R-CH-E, and then add it all up."

"Thirty-two millions!" said the Chancellor, in despair, "and I've promised to reduce taxation."

"Say twenty-four and a-half millions extra, my dear fellow. The rest is not of overwhelming importance."

"But how am I to get even that and reduce taxation?"

"Nudge D-V-NSH-RE, H-M-LT-N. Now, my dear Duke, we are in an awkward fix, and require your solid abilities to help us out of it. We want to increase expenditure by twenty-four and a-half millions, and at the same time to reduce taxation. How is it to be done?"

"Borrow," said the Duke.

"Make a note of that admirable word, R-CH-E," cried the delighted Premier.

"I knew the Duke would pull us through. What judgment! What knowledge of affairs! Gentlemen, I foresee that our worthy Chancellor will be able to bring forward a highly popular Budget."

A GREAT BLOW TO THE CHURCH.—The Chancellor of the Exchequer is said to be proposing to coin a nickel twopenny-piece. Mr. YERKES has signified his approval.

"THE CHILD IS FATHER OF THE MAN."

"He was singing, and I told him to leave off," said a boy the other day, speaking of his father, whom he was charging with assault at the Marylebone Police Court. In answer to the magistrate the son insisted on his right to control the actions of his father.]

"..... You are wanted in the nursery!" The maid uttered the message at the library door.

"Who by?" asked the man faintly, his face assuming a deadly pallor.

"Your son, of course," replied the girl, adding, "And you'd better get quick, or I can tell you you'll catch it!"

Needing no second bidding, the man started to his feet, rushed upstairs, and knocked timorously at the nursery door.

For a moment no notice was taken. Then a voice called, "Come in!"

The trembling father entered, advanced with downcast head, and stood before his stern seven-year-old son.

"Why were you so long?"

"Please—I—I—didn't know you wanted me."

"Didn't know! You'd no business not to know! Didn't know indeed!"

"I'm—I'm very sorry, son," put in the parent faintly.

"Sorry? Of course you're sorry now, when you know what you will get. But I didn't send for you to hear excuses. I sent for you to ask you a question. What is this that I hear about smoking?"

No answer beyond a feeble muttering.

"Do you hear me?" cried the son sharply.

"I—I—wasn't smoking."

"How dare you tell me that! Your daughter was in the nursery ten minutes ago, and told me that she met you on the stairs last night, and that she distinctly saw you hide a cigarette. She has gone out driving in her perambulator, or she would herself charge you. Are you ashamed of yourself, or are you not?"

"Y-y-yes."

"Now, listen—you are to bring me every bit of tobacco you have in the house, and don't you let me catch you with a cigarette again! Is this the way you return all the kindness you have received at the hands of your daughter and myself? Often have we sat in the nursery far into the watches of the afternoon discussing your future—planning what we can do to make you happy and contented. (Sobs from unhappy father.) You have grieved me beyond words! I have given you a son's loving care, and you—but what is the good of talking? There is only one thing to do—though it will hurt me more than it will hurt you. Lean over that rocking-horse." . . .

**THE TRIALS OF A DÉBUTANTE.**

The Twin Muddletons (both claiming the dance, after much argument, simultaneously), "WELL, WE LEAVE IT TO YOU, MISS BROWN. YOU MUST KNOW WHOM YOU GAVE THIS DANCE TO!"
[Miss Brown, never having seen them before this, her first Ball, and quite unable to tell t'other from which, has no views on the question.]

A BOURCHIER-ISED PRESS.

Mr. A. J. B-l-f-r to Editor of "Punch."—"As your Mr. TOBY, no doubt from a defect of temperament, seems unable to bring the requisite amount of seriousness to his report of the proceedings of the House of Commons, I shall be glad if you will arrange to have the 'Essence of Parliament' written by another reporter. It would be exceedingly painful to me to have to call in the services of the Sergeant-at-Arms."

Mr. Ch-mb-rl-n to Editor of "Westminster Gazette."—"Please give your Mr. GOULD a long holiday. If necessary a cruiser will be provided to take him to the Cape. I do not object to reasonable caricature, but every picture by Mr. G. is a vote given to the Liberals."

Sir H. C-mpb-ll-B-nn-rm-n to Editor of "Daily Mail."—"Much as I appre-

ciate your excellent halfpennyworth (being Scotch), I am compelled to direct your attention to your leader-writer, who has recently treated my leadership with scant respect. Give him the usual Institute of Journalists' notice or I shall proceed to take in the *Express*."

The Poet Laureate to almost any Editor.—"I have to request that my forthcoming book of verse be not given to the desperado who reviewed my last. Another review like his and I shall be revenged in an ode."

Mr. Cobalt, R.A., to Editor of the journal he most fears.—"I have to request that you will not send to the forthcoming Press view of the Academy the art reporter who treated my last year's work so shamefully. I need scarcely say that I do so entirely in your own interest, as we artists never read unfair criticism, and your circulation suffers accordingly."

OUR BOOKING-OFFICE.

Lady Rose's Daughter (SMITH, ELDER), Mrs. HUMPHRY WARD's latest novel, will by many, including my Baronite, be reckoned her best. It is free from the weight of set purpose, and has no moral other than the elementary one, that attractive young ladies, deeply in love with a man engaged to be married to some one else, would do well not to accept an audacious proposal from him secretly to leave home and spend a few days with him in a remote country hostelry in France. With this bold divagation the story is simply one of everyday life in the upper circles of English Society. Mrs. WARD knows *au fond* the locality and the inhabitants. Her people, male and female, think, live and talk very much as do their models, only in respect of conversation they are, apparently without effort, much more brilliant. The heroine is a fascinating study of a wayward individuality. More familiar in London life are *Lady Henry* and the *Duchess of Crouborough*. The latter is quite delightful and really human. Perhaps unconsciously Mrs. WARD tints her portraiture with reminiscences of living personages. My Baronite seems to know the Duke. But his consort, the pretty little Duchess, gay, light-hearted, audacious, loving, throws one off the scent. The interest of the story never flags, culminating occasionally in such episodes as *Lady Henry's* descent on her unbidden guests, and *Julie Le Breton's* flight to Paris.

At a time when the intellectual capacities of the British officer have been called in question, it is a pleasure, says my Nautical Retainer, to have in my hand two excellent books of light verse, the work of "COLDSTREAMER" and "DUM-DUM," soldiers both, and inspired by Africa's sunny fountains and India's coral strand, respectively. While each has mastered the technique of the thing, and handles his material confidently—there is scarcely a line unrhymed or ill-rhymed in either book—"DUM-DUM's" *In the Hills* (THACKER) is much more ambitious, and covers a far wider range. "COLDSTREAMER," in his *Ballads of the Boer War* (GRANT RICHARDS), confines himself to the philosophic comments of THOMAS ATKINS, to which he gives the best expression we have hitherto encountered in bulk. Coming from "one who knows," we must accept the language as truly representative of the type, although, when Mr. KIPLING or any other civilian imputes the same methods of diction to the private soldier, we are told that a great injustice has been done to that hero's sense of culture. "COLDSTREAMER" is nearly always too diffuse; and he is perhaps a little too ingenuous in his trick of making TOMMY abuse almost everybody but himself and the British officer, and reserve his highest compliments for the author's own Regiment. However, this last is perhaps only a proper *esprit de corps*, and nobody that reads these very human verses is likely to grudge anyone the rare honour of TOMMY's panegyrics.

"DUM-DUM," as I said, is far more versatile, but he, too, tends to be diffuse (who shall throw the first stone?), and, like all of us at one time or another, keeps a little too close to his master, CALVERLEY. Elephants are, perhaps, his *forte*, and his address to one of these "two-tailed" monsters (discovered from behind on his knees) is a masterpiece. "DUM-DUM" should have been at home the other day, writing another "Vale Elephas" to our departing Jingo.

My Nautical Retainer joins heartily in the universal approval of the work of two of Mr. *Punch's* own henchmen, "E. V. L. and C. L. G.," whose *Wisdom while you Wait* (ISBISTER) has at last found a publisher fearless enough to produce this exquisite burlesque upon the methods of the *Encyclopædia Britannica* Syndicate. The town is coloured

red with it. Laughter, "holding both his sides," is to be seen in every corner. The hospitals are full of patients with a strain in their ribs: but otherwise nobody is hurt at all.

The Last Foray, by R. H. FORSTER (JOHN LONG), is a commendable and recommendable attempt to revive interest in the historical novel. The style is good, and the author has sketched his period, the dawn of the Reformation, fairly well. The descriptions of Border life in the early days of Bluff King HAL are interesting, but the dialogue throughout is rather dull, a sort of cross between the pseudo-mediaevalism of G. P. R. JAMES and the real thing.

At its commencement *A Red, Red Rose*, by KATHARINE TYNAN (NASH), suggests to the reader that he has entered, as a stranger, hospitably received, into the midst of a family party, whose conversation turns mainly on certain domestic matters, the importance of which he can only politely pretend to appreciate. As the visitor gradually begins to feel on a better footing with his entertainers, so he enters with increasing interest into their daily doings. Such interest, once aroused, increases as the story proceeds, but it is never at any time so strong as to be absorbing. There is much picturesque description that is admirable, and a great deal of quiet observation of human nature in circumstances of a not exceptionally trying character; and herein consists the special charm of KATHARINE TYNAN's work.

THE BARON DE B.-W.

MUSICAL GOSSIP.

(New Style.)

It is estimated by Sir ROBERT GIFFEN that the number of women who are to be deprived of the chance of marrying Herr KUBELIK is 51,391,472.

GOSPODIN BOLOSSY BOVRILSKY, the great Cossack contrabassist, has taken to golf. With a handicap of 56 he was actually 13 down on Bogey at the last monthly competition at Lompalanka.

Mlle. DANIELA DERONDA, the Syrian contralto, has been decorated by the SULTAN with the Order of the Jerusalem Artichoke. A portrait of the gifted artist, with artichoke, appears in the last number of *Home Prattle*.

M. PROSPER UKHTOMSKY, the Bessarabian pianist, has purchased a cattle-run in Arizona. He finds the work of a cow-puncher admirably suited to keeping his hand in.

During his recent tour in the United States the Chevalier BOLESŁAS SIMJANKI, the one-eyed Armenian violinist, received offers of marriage from no fewer than seventeen millionaires. The rival claims having been referred to a plébiscite of readers of the *North Atlantic Hairdressers' Gazette*, an overwhelming majority was returned in favour of Miss EDNA McCASSER, the Oregon Oil Queen.

Mlle. OBBIA BOHOTLE, the Somali mezzo-soprano, has given £3000 for her new motor car. With a generosity that cannot be too highly commended, Mlle. BOHOTLE has engaged a destitute English composer as chauffeur and accompanist.

Miss MAMIE CACHALOT, the New South Wales *prima donna*, who is so well known for her pronounced Imperialist views, has bequeathed her larynx to the British Museum.

M. SEVCIK, the Bohemian *maestro*, when not engaged in training prodigies, devotes all his leisure to the elucidation of Coptic palimpsests.

Sir CHARLES STANFORD has purchased a motor-bicycle, which he rides with the soft pedal down.

THE WOOING.

[The sporting instinct is now so keen among girls that a man who gallantly moderates his hitting in mixed hockey is merely regarded as an *incapable slacker* by his fair opponents.]

WHEN first I played hockey with KITTY,
I was right off my usual game,
For she looked so bewitchingly pretty
When straight for the circle she came;
As a rule I'm not backward, or chary
Of hitting and harassing too,
But who can be rough with a fairy—
Not I—so I let her go through.

She scored, and we couldn't get equal,
The others all thought me a fool,
And KITTY herself, in the sequel,
Grew most unexpectedly cool.
They gave us a licking, as stated,
I was sick at the sight of the ball,
She thought me a lot over-rated,
And wondered they played me at all.

But she frankly approved PERCY WATERS,
Who uses his stick like a flail,
And always impartially slaughters
Both sexes, the strong and the frail;
A mutual friendliness followed,
I watched its career with dismay—
Next match-day my feelings I swallowed,
And hit in my orthodox way.

I caught her a crunch on the knuckle,
A clip on the knee and the cheek,
She said, with a rapturous chuckle,
"I see—you weren't trying last week."

Such conduct its cruelty loses
When it brings consolation to both,
For after she'd counted her bruises
That evening we plighted our troth.

NEEDS OF THE NATIONS.

[“If we may believe the Washington correspondent of the *New York World*, the U. S. A. Government are to propose to Portugal that they should take a short lease of Lisbon for the purpose of blockading it, presumably with dummy shells. . . . The object is to prove that the American navy can cross the ocean to take the offensive.”—*St. James's Gazette*.]

THE above passage suggests a new and extended field of usefulness for the property-market as well as a fresh era of prosperity for countries and cities which have known better days. Perhaps before long we may see some such advertisements as these:—

WANTED.—Good roomy continent for Army Manœuvres and colonising experiments. The larger the better. Good price offered for immediate possession. Also wanted, good-sized ocean and part fleet.—Wire, W. H., Potsdam, Germany.

TO BE LET, for summer season. Large ancient city; great historical and antiquarian interest. Admirably adapted for sieges, surprises, sorties, &c. Artillery, men, &c., can be let



SO VERY CONSCIENTIOUS!

Master of the House. "WHY, JENKINS, WHAT ON EARTH IS THE MATTER WITH YOU? AREN'T YOU ASHAMED OF YOURSELF?"

Butler (with great deliberation). "WELL, SHIR—IF YOU PLEASHE, SHIR—ITSH NOT QUITE MY FAULT. YOU TOLD ME TO TASTE EVERY BOTTLE OF WINE BEFORE DINNER, IN CASHE ONE SHOULD BE CORKED. I'VE ONLY CARRIED OUT IN-SHTRUCSHUNS."

with city if desired, or bring own.—S. P. Q. R., Box 21.

STREET FIGHTING, every opportunity for.—Houses lean across streets; invading army inevitably destroyed by brickbats from upper windows. European tenants preferred.—Address, MAYOR, Carlisle.

BARGAIN.—Beautiful green island offered for internecine warfare. Home-grown enemy always in stock. Moonlight operations; every attraction. No English need apply.—Write, ERIN, Europe.

RULER of large and pleasant Empire has vacancy for pupil to learn autocracy and give moral support. Live in palace. Excellent mixed shoot-

ing. Strong head of Armenians in immediate vicinity. Army provided if wished, but better bring own. Religious convictions no bar.—Address, CALIPH, Yildiz Kiosk. (Excellent testimonials.) **REQUIRED AT ONCE.**—Empty country, desert preferred (with lions and alligators), for settlement of undesirable aliens.—Apply HOWARD VINCENT, Army and Navy Auxiliary Stores, Great Britain.

GOOD HOME, free life, every opportunity for expert criminals, unlimited prospects, no charges.—JOHN BULL, London, England. (Testimonial: "Since I came to London I have found it necessary to go nowhere else.—HAMAN UNHUNGSKI.")



LONDON DAY BY DAY.

First Cabbie. "NICE THING, AIN'T IT, GEORGE! BLOWED IF I KNOW WHERE LONDON IS, NOWADAYS!"

CHARIVARIA.

At last a serious attempt is to be made to educate our officers. Meanwhile an intimation has been sent round to the Great Powers to the effect that we would take it as a favour if they would not make war on us until we have had time to give the new Education Scheme a chance.

We hear, on the authority of certain Senior Subalterns, that certain Junior Subalterns who recently severed their connection with the Brigade of Guards are to be attached to other Regiments as Regimental Pets.

The Picture Puzzle craze is spreading to all classes. Mr. WINSTON CHURCHILL has, we hear, been going about with a drawing of an officer, a private, and a tin shed, and has been asking his friends to guess what it represented. Mr. BRODRICK secured the Consolation Prize.

More Submarines are to be built, and Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE is to ask the question whether it is not a fact that these craft frequently go down with all hands.

Of our two newest battleships, one

has had to return three times owing to her boilers breaking down, while the other has gone through her trials satisfactorily. This is considered a very fair average.

A Russian spy was recently arrested while preparing to make plans of our fortifications at Aden. He was escorted back to his ship, and, quite rightly, told that he had been guilty of a breach of etiquette.

The *Daily Express* would seem to have an Irishman on its staff. An article in that paper on the Navy's Secret Code informs us that "the agents of Foreign Powers are known to have offered as much as £5000 for the unattainable little books which have before now been stolen."

England has made a pretty gift to one of her most loyal Colonies. On his expressing an earnest desire to go to Canada, a young burglar was set free at the Old Bailey last week to start life afresh.

A "Club du Silence," or Silent Club, for men, has been formed in Paris. An attempt to form a similar one for ladies has been found impracticable.

The feature of the coming season, in fashions, is said to be Short Skirts and Long Feet.

LORD MONKSWELL has been elected Chairman of the London County Council, and, in thanking his colleagues, said he regarded that office as the greatest prize in municipal life. We fear the Chairmanship is like London—greatly over-rated.

The *Novoe Vremya* considers that "so long as the British Army consists of hirelings, so long will its significance, from a military point of view, be, as heretofore, very small." Crimean Veterans, please note.

As a rule, upon marriage, the wife takes the husband's name, but a certain *cause célèbre* would seem to show that Mr. CAVENDISH, even before his marriage, became a Jay.

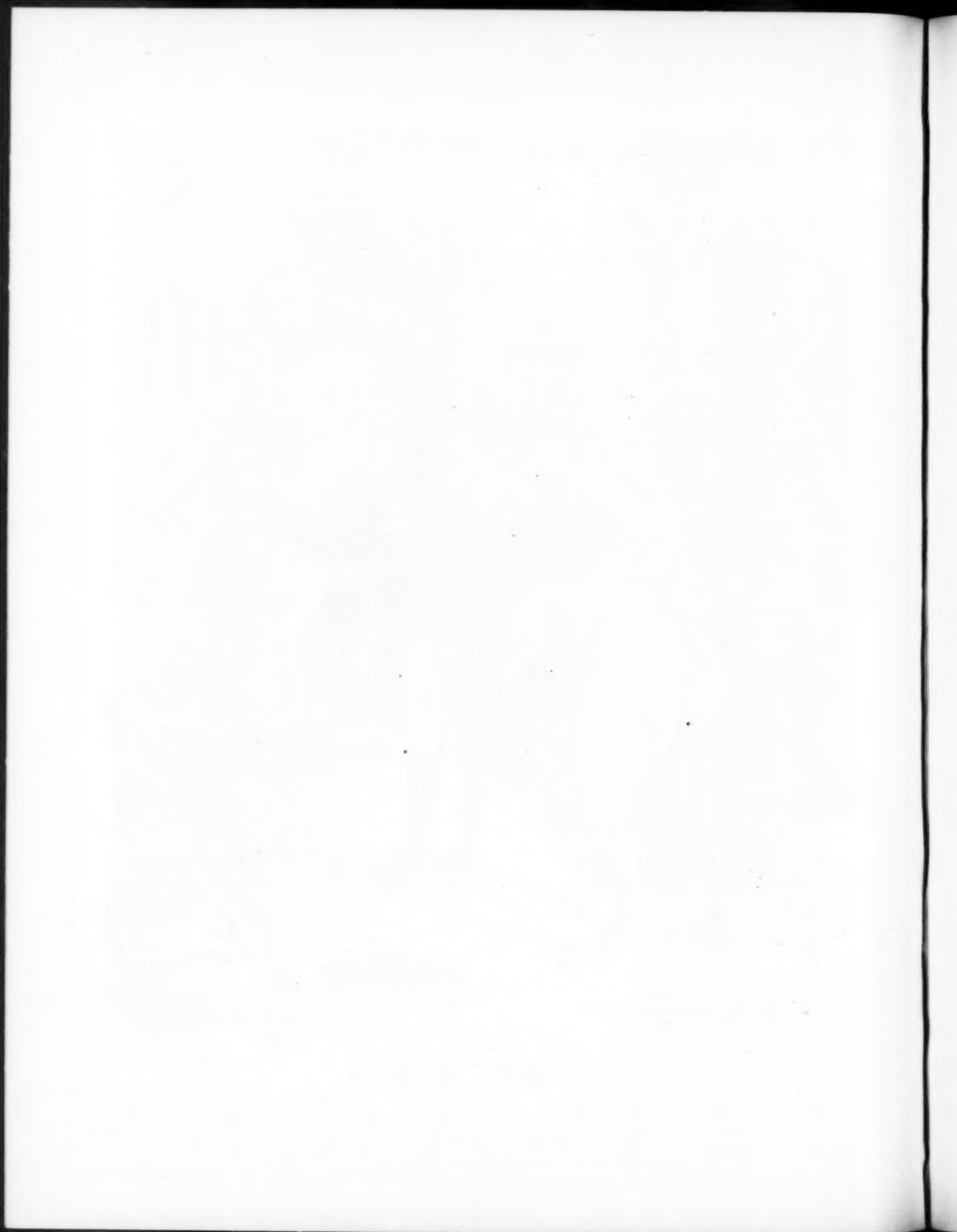
A SUBSTANTIAL EPITHET.—The *Daily Chronicle*, speaking of Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN, says:—"Ponderosity immediately occurs to one as a suitable adjective to describe him." We sincerely hope that this kind of adjective will not occur again.



A SHORT MEMORY.

MR. BULL. "GOOD HEAVENS, MAN, I CAN'T AFFORD A DOG THAT SIZE!"

RIGHT HON. W. ST. JOHN BRIDGES. "WELL, GUV'NOR, NOT SO LONG AGO, WHEN THERE WAS BURGLARS ABOUT, YOU WAS IN SUCH A BLOOMIN' FUNK YOU SAID AS YOU COULDN'T 'AVE A DAWG BIG ENOUGH, AND DIDN'T CARE WHAT YOU PAID FOR 'IM!"



ESSENCE OF PARLIAMENT.

EXTRACTED FROM THE DIARY OF TOBY, M.P.

House of Commons, Monday, March 9.

—Although of aldermanic race there is nothing in the appearance of Sir EDWIN DURNING-LAWRENCE, Bart., suggestive of *Mr. Pickwick's* acquaintance the *Fat Boy*. Nevertheless, in capacity for making the flesh creep, he runs that immortal youth uncommonly close. Long time since House so startled as at his appearance this afternoon. Prayers just over; Members risen from their knees with chastened spirit, at peace with all men. The Irish landlord looked with softened glance across the floor at a quarter, for obvious reason empty at the moment, where representatives of Irish tenants sit. Millennium was at hand. He (the landlord) is to receive full value for his property; the tenant is to pay twenty per cent. less than its market price, and the British taxpayer will, out of his sorely drained pocket, supply the difference.

Pleased reflection on this prospect broken in upon by the voice of Sir EDWIN DURNING-LAWRENCE, Bart. "Mr. SPEAKER, Sir," he said, in voice choking with emotion and his just uttered "Amen," "I wish to call your attention to an ungentlemanly act performed this morning by a Member of this House."

Hon. gentlemen on both sides huddled together as sheep do in anticipation of a storm. What could have happened? Was it possible there had been introduced into the Commons House of Parliament the polished manners, the playful ways, of the Grenadier Guards? Had the Member for the stainless Borough of Truro, entering the House, bent on performance of his public duty, been waylaid, carried off to Committee Room No. 15, tried by a hybrid Com-



"L'ŒIL DU MAÎTRE."

(After the lithograph by Rafter.)



"Son and brother of many aldermen."
(Sir Edw-n D-rn-ng-L-wr-nce.)

mittee, sentenced to punishment, and—Heaven forbid!—whacked?

Only the SPEAKER preserved unruffled composure. Going straight to point he said, "The hon. Member had better state what is the act he complains of."

Members, their suspicions aroused, curiously watched the son and brother of many aldermen, as on the interposition of the SPEAKER he resumed his seat. They observed that the action was perfectly unrestrained, indicating absence of personal inconvenience. That seemed to dispose of the ragging theory. What else could it be?

Sir EDWIN with alacrity rose to explain. Coming down in good time for prayers he discovered, set in the brass sockets of the very bench below the Gangway to which his habitual presence lends

distinction, cards bearing the names of two middle-aged young gentlemen who of late have spoken disrespectfully of the Secretary of State for War, and disclosed other indications of mutinous spirit towards a Government which enjoys the full confidence of Sir EDWIN DURNING-LAWRENCE, Bart. The proceeding was incontestably irregular. With an eye to the spiritual welfare of hon. Members, decree was long ago made that, in order to secure a particular seat, the claimant must be present through the devotional exercise that daily precedes attention to mundane affairs. The two gentlemen whose names were on the cards had certainly not been present at prayers, and, but for the eagle eye of Sir EDWIN DURNING-LAWRENCE, Bart., would have profited by their iniquitous proceeding

and secured an advantageous kopje from which they could fire on the riddled figure of the English CARNOT on the Treasury Bench.

This was very shocking. But, coming close upon exhilarating anticipation hinted at, it partook of the character and effect of an anti-climax. No one was hung, and Sir EDWIN DURNING-LAWRENCE, Bart., subsided.

Business done.—Army Estimates on. More sniping at the Treasury Bench from below the Gangway.

Tuesday night.—There may be bold difference of opinion as to merits of CARNOT NAPOLEON ST. JOHN BRODRICK'S Army Corps plan. There is none as to the service he has, undesignedly, done his party and the House of Commons by discovery of budding genius below Gangway on Ministerial side. This afternoon IVOR GUEST emerged from obscurity; moved reduction of vote for men in speech of conspicuous debating ability. Evidently prepared with care. After an illustrious example, cherished in the New Forest, he brought down series of impromptus fairly written out on irresponsible foolscap. These were deftly constructed, highly-polished. But not least effective passages were in reply to speech just delivered by Secretary of State. Practically, if not actually, this was a maiden speech. It instantly made its mark. Old stagers recognised in it here and there touches of a vanished hand, the sound of a voice that is still. RANDOLPH CHURCHILL is now worthily represented in the House he loved by two kinsmen, son WINSTON and nephew IVOR. After to-day's disclosure the latter will always be a welcome GUEST.

Another excellent speech on same side by another new man. EVANS-GORDON may have spoken before; either didn't hear him or he left no impression on my mind. In seconding amendment to-day he delivered weighty speech. His testimony, based on long official experience in India, as to grip England has got on that part of the Empire, created deep impression. Is worth close study at home and abroad.

Speech none the less effective for its almost tearful disclaimer of personal feeling against the Organiser of Victory. Standing immediately behind Treasury Bench, on which a martial figure reclined, tears from the emotional Major's trembling eyes were in danger of falling on CARNOT'S crest. By mighty effort he dammed their source.

Business done.—Young men below Gangway, sword in hand, fall afresh on hapless War Secretary, who, single-handed, pluckily confronts them.

Friday night.—Very few Members of present House were here when AUSTEN HENRY LAYARD sat in it, first as representative of Aylesbury, next as Member



A Long-Range Shot at Lord Methuen.
(From the Press Gallery to the Peers'.)

for Southwark. The years fell between 1852 and 1869. He was, on Mr. G.'s initiative, at latter date named Minister at Madrid, and commenced a memorable diplomatic career that terminated in turmoil and Constantinople. In the first, not least interesting chapter of his autobiography, just published by JOHN MURRAY, LAYARD writes of himself when a small school-boy, "I was very idle, self-willed, and troublesome."

Got over his idleness, but self-willed and troublesome he was to the last. Ready to quarrel with anybody, Providence by special favour placed him in



The "Brodder" or India-rubber Punching-Ball for Rising Statesmen.

No amount of pounding makes the faintest impression.

the same Ministry as AYRTON. Rumoured that in respect of two individualities, brotherly love didn't continue throughout Lord ROSEBURY'S brief administration. Nothing to the daily scenes in Mr. G.'s Government of 1868, in which AYRTON was Financial Secretary to the Treasury, and LAYARD First Commissioner of Works. ARTHUR OTWAY, whose reappearance in whatever capacity old Members warmly greet, contributes to the two handsome volumes a chapter describing the Parliamentary life of LAYARD, with which his own was contemporary. The First Commissioner of Works, he records, gratefully accepted the offer of Madrid. But the bitter drop in his cup, spoiling its sweet savour, was the news that AYRTON had been promoted to his vacant office.

Through a long career, chequered by many troubles, probably the severest trial Mr. G. survived was companionship in administrative office of LAYARD and AYRTON. Two terriers, each remembering how upon occasion the other had bitten him in a tender place, are peaceful neighbours compared with these self-willed, truculent gentry.

The last we heard in the Commons of LAYARD was on a memorable night in February, 1878. He was at the time Minister at Constantinople; naturally took to aping STRATFORD DE REDCLIFFE'S masterful ways. House had gathered to consider Vote of Credit which DIZZY flaunted in the face of the CZAR. FORSTER, on the Front Opposition Bench, had given notice of amendment. Before he rose in crowded House, breathless with excitement, apparently on eve of colossal war, came a telegram from LAYARD announcing that in spite of armistice the Russians were pushing on to Constantinople, had driven Turks from important lines of defence.

"Our Ambassador to the Porte," said JOHN BRIGHT, who knew his LAYARD, "has been alarmed several times."

The sneer was swiftly justified. Even whilst BRIGHT spoke there reached STAFFORD NORTHCOTE on the Treasury Bench a communication from Russian Ambassador absolutely denying accuracy of LAYARD'S statement. The contradiction was fully verified by facts.

Turned over pages to see what LAYARD had to say on this dramatic incident. But story terminates in 1869, on eve of his departure for Madrid. We are half-promised the rest in due course; shall look for fulfilment. Can scarcely have too much in the way of personal record of this many-sided man, Member of Parliament, Ambassador, artist, traveller, who discovered the remains of Nineveh, and made mincemeat of every man (except AYRTON) who vexed his soul. *Business done.*—Debate round Church Discipline Bill.



THE CAPPING QUESTION IN THE SHIRES.

Trials of a Hunt Secretary.

LIGHT COMEDY FOR AN AUDIENCE IN THE DARK.

BRIGHTLY written is the true comedy dialogue that characterises the latest work for the stage of Mr. HENRY ARTHUR JONES, entitled *Whitewashing Julia*. The individualities of the thoroughly natural types with which he presents us in his *dramatis personæ* are clearly defined, and the scenes are highly amusing. The comedy is excellently played by Miss VIOLET VANBRUGH as *Julia Wren*, to whose name in the bill is prefixed neither "Miss" nor "Mrs."; by Mr. ARTHUR BOURCHIER as *Mr. William Stillingfleet*, "the wicked uncle"; by Miss M. TALBOT as *Lady Pinkney*, the wicked uncle's sister; and by Mr. CHARLES GROVES in the genial part of *Mr. Samways*, "the Shantonbury Lawyer."

But, delightfully amusing as are these brightly-written and well-played scenes in quick succession, the comedy labours under one great misfortune and one hopeless fault. Its misfortune is to have been called by a title so unattractive as *Whitewashing Julia*. This ill-chosen title is misleading as being contrary to fact, since *Julia*, a lady "with a past," never is whitewashed, nor is there any such operation in process at any time during the play. Her own lawyer, *Mr. Samways*, would like to be able to whitewash her, which is quite another thing; but he cannot; nor can anybody else. So much for the "misfortune." Its "fault" is irretrievable, since it is the essential one of its construction. A secret there is, and from the very first the audience should be in possession of it; the whole plot turns on it. Yet at the end of the play neither *dramatis personæ*, nor audience, are one whit the wiser as to what that secret is!

The play ought to have commenced with a prologue giving that one incident in the life of *Julia* which, if subsequently it had become public property, would have ruined her reputation. Lacking such a prologue, the audience applaud players and dialogue, but depart unsatisfied.

Mr. SAM SOTHERN and Mr. KENNETH DOUGLAS represent the two brothers, the *Hon. Edwin* and *Hon. Bevis Pinkney*, who, the one a silly prodigal and the other a sententious hypocrite, are watered-down-to-date versions of *Charles* and *Joseph Surface*; and both parts are remarkably well rendered.

Miss ETHELWYN A. JONES is a spirited *Trizie*, a quick-tempered, untrained girl, though her colouring of it is a trifle too high, as is also her tone. As the low adventuress, *Mrs. Benbow*, without a single redeeming point, Miss DOLORES DRUMMOND plays the character for all it is dramatically (not morally) worth; and this is equally true of Miss ELFRIDA CLEMENT, representing her daughter *Rosie*.

There is a novel and capital-contrived effect of a hail-storm, first pelting, then dropping, and gradually ceasing, on the overhead canvas of the "common or garden" tent in the First Act. Realistic to a degree. Not a drop too much! Just enough for two, ARTHUR BOURCHIER and Miss VANBRUGH. In the sudden violence and gradual cessation of this tempest we seem to hear symbolised that other storm that raged for a while between the Garrick Theatre and Printing House Square, concerning which Our Dramatic Poet sends the following vivid description, which he terms

THE DARING OF JONES.

INSPIRE me, Muse, to tell in awe-struck tones
The tangled tale of HENRY ARTHUR JONES;
Of HENRY ARTHUR JONES and ARTHUR BOURCHIER—
No faint-heart he, no common suppliant croucher!
Inspire me, Muse, and guide my pen aright,
Nor let me deal in *persiflage* or spite,
Or use such words as rack the tender bones
And pierce the heart of HENRY ARTHUR JONES.
If he resents, as men may do and live,
The pain a critic's sentences can give;

If, when he sees his play described as "*rosse*,
His being shivers with a sense of loss;
If Monte Carlo, when referred to, wrings
His mind with all the wantonness of things—
If praise, in short, offends him less than blame,
WALKLEY's the fault, and WALKLEY's be the shame.
It was a night in March and, well content,
Off to the Garrick Theatre WALKLEY went.
He was a critic, but he looked a man
Built on the ordinary human plan.
His hat was sleek, its brims were duly arched;
His collar and his shirt were stiffly starched;
White was his tie, and swallow-tailed and black
The trim dress-coat he bore upon his back;
His shoes were patent, and his silken socks
Were marked and flanked by decorative clocks;
Trousers he had, a waistcoat and a chain;
An overcoat protected him from rain;
Next add a face, a mind most analytic,
Two hands, three studs—and there you have the critic.
Briskly he walked and, as he went along,
Whistled a stave, like one who thinks no wrong,
And trolled a snatch of some remembered song.
Unwarned of all the dangers that he dared,
His mind was calm, his pencil was prepared;
Thoughtless of BOURCHIER, who controlled the show,
Careless of HENRY ARTHUR JONES, his foe,
Without a fear, unconscious of a sin,
Straight to his doom he passed and so went in.
But "Hist! he comes!" ('twas BOURCHIER gave the word,
And from their lurking-place his minions heard),
"Now do your duty; let him hear our fiat,
And bid him go in peace and leave us quiet.
Thus JONES has ordered; JONES, who wrote the play,
Prefers that WALKLEY should be sent away;
But, lest we play the low-born dastard's part
And quite forget the decencies of Art,
Take him, to mitigate his dreadful doom,
Take him," said BOURCHIER, "to the ROYAL ROOM;
There, on the floor that Royal feet have graced,
Bid him be off with all convenient haste."
So said, so done. The public heard the story,
And cared no jot for all this wounded glory;
With noted names, in fact, they made too free,
Thinking what fools these playhouse mortals be,
And saying, lastly, in their boredom, "Bother!
We're sick and tired of this dramatic pother."

Lenten Discipline.

Aunt (to small niece and smaller nephew). Can't you two children give up some little pleasure before Lent is over?
Nephew. Well, MOLLIE's going to give up teasing me, and I'm going to give up hitting her when she does.

Suggested Reforms at the Zoo.

- (1) That the Tapir be lighted up after dark.
- (2) That most of the Monkeys be sent to the furriers for repairs.
- (3) That a cheap book of etiquette be placed in their cage.
- (4) That dress improvers be provided for the Llama and the Kiwi.
- (5) That the Blotched Genet be put on the Black List.
- (6) That the Dusty Ichneumon be swept.

SHAKSPEARIAN ADVICE (AND WILLIAM WAS AN OLD HAND) TO ACTOR-MANAGERS.—"Dally not with the gods."—*Taming of the Shrew*, Act IV., Sc. 4.

SQUARING THE CIRCLE.—"Flat feeling all round" (*Stock Exchange Intelligence*).

THE BACILLUS OF LOVE.

["Some eminent professors in Paris have discovered that love is a bacillus, and a well-known specialist declares 'that love is one of our most dangerous inheritances from the dark ages, one that has been kept alive and fostered by polite literature. It should be under control of a Board of Health that possessed full police authority, and should only be dispensed with the greatest care—after the manner of a drug.'"]

SCENE—The Love Department of the Board of Health. It is arranged after the manner of a chemist's shop, and is supervised by an elderly gentleman with a benevolent beard and a somewhat paternal manner.

Enter MARY JENKINS, a servant. She counts out six coppers and bangs them on the counter.

Official (beaming through his glasses like a railway lamp). Yes, and what can we do for you?

Mary (unabashed). Sixpennorth o' them microbes like Misses 'as. My young man ses as 'ow 'e's sick of the friendly 'ow-d'ye-do, and wants to get on with the "burnin' glow o' passion" like they do in the books.

Official (gravely). I am afraid you must bring a certificate from the rector saying that you are fit to be trusted with the "Passionate Glow." You see last week we sold half-a-crown's worth to an elderly statesman, and under its exciting influence he—well, he babbled, and there may be a complication. I can, however, let you have some of our "Brotherly Love" or "Sincere Friendship" put up in bottles. We are selling a lot just now.

Mary (replacing the coppers in her purse). I don't think that'd do for JIM, Sir, so we'll 'ave to do the best we can without. [Exit.]

[Official retires to the inner room and cuffs the Errand Boy, who is toying with the lid of a jar labelled "The Dawn of Love." The door-bell rings. Enter PERCY. He is just "PERCY" of the musical comedies. He raps on the counter; the Official hurries forward.]

Percy. I want a large box of "Love at First Sight." The strongest you've got—what? And how do you use the dashed things—eh?

Official (rapidly repeating formula). Open the box in room or place where is the object of the affections, or administer a spoonful secretly, and the reciprocity will be instantaneous. Name and address, please, and state whether affections have been previously engaged. Only twice? (Hands paper.) Set forth the time, date, and address in Schedule A., and sign your name here, please. That will be seven-and-six.

Percy (after scrawling his signature).

Suppose you couldn't send the box round with my compliments—what? Save such a lot of trouble, you know, eh?

Official. We don't advise that course. We did send the office boy on a similar errand once, and the result was disastrous. He incautiously opened the box in a 'bus, and for weeks the office was visited by an elderly lady who declared that she was "haunted by his sweet face day and night, and she would never rest till he was hers!"

Percy. I say, that was deuced awkward—what?

Official. Yes, it was really most awkward; and we had to call in our amatory expert. I must say he dealt with the case in a masterly manner. He advised a spoonful of an "Inexplicable Aversion" mixture in a cup of tea, and in five minutes the

aged one had boxed the errand boy's ears and quitted the shop. The husband came next day and said that things were very wrong at home, and he would like a ten-shilling bottle of "Wifely Love" for domestic purposes. (Musingly) After all, the Department did very well out of that case. I beg your pardon, Sir, your change. Thank you, good morning.

Percy (as he takes his parcel and exits). Old boy can chatter. Suppose he's been through this sort of thing and is weather-proof. Hope this'll come off all right. Jolly beastly if it doesn't.

[In the Department business is quiet during the luncheon hour. A small boy tries to purchase a box of "Sincerest Devotion," and is severely cross-examined by the Official. Upon being told that it is to be used in connection with a head-master's elder daughter the application is refused, and there is another broken heart in the world. The Official answers two or three letters, and addresses several her-



LIFE'S LITTLE IRONIES.

SCENE—At an Art Exhibition.

He. "WELL, HOW DO YOU LIKE BROWN'S PICTURE?"

She. "THAT ONE? WHY, I THOUGHT IT WAS YOURS! VERY BAD, ISN'T IT?"

metically sealed boxes to well-known actors and poets. He then puts on a broad-brimmed hat and flowing cape-coat, to live up to his office, and goes out to lunch. He unwisely—and against the regulations—leaves the Department in charge of the Errand Boy. Ten minutes later enter a Young Lady. She would look upon twenty-three as old age, and is sweet and delightful from hat to shoe.

The Errand Boy (in weak imitation of the Platonic Chief). And what can we do for you, Miss?

Young Lady (blushing and speaking in a pretty whisper). I want a box—a small box of those things that you use when you want to let anyone feel that they are—that they may hope.

Errand Boy (cheerfully). Oh, you want a box of the "Come to my Arms" brand.

Young Lady (eagerly). Oh, not quite so strong as that, please. Something more reserved, but something that will make PERCY—will make people understand.



SOME MORE INNOVATIONS.

Errand Boy. Right O!

[Pleasantly wraps up a box of the strongest brand in the Department. To intimates and experts it is known as the "Keep off the Grass" brand. The Young Lady accepts it gratefully and exits.]

[The Errand Boy whistles cheerfully, and, unconscious of having done mischief, plunges into the thrills of "Blood-Stained Bill"; or, the Terror of Clapham Common." Enter Mr. JACOB DRYSDALE, a distinctly country solicitor. He is middle-aged and short-sighted, carries his coppers in a purse, and wears thick clumping boots.]

The Solicitor. Have I the pleasure of addressing the head of the Love Department?

Errand Boy (proudly). That's me.

The Solicitor. Really! Well, let me state my case briefly and succinctly. I am, alas! a widower. I think there is One who returns my passion, but I am doubtful.

The Errand Boy. Ah, we've 'ad them sort of cases 'ere before.

The Solicitor. She is no longer young, nor would I approach her in the boisterous manner of youth. I would therefore purchase something that might enable me to convey my devotion in a straightforward and simple manner without the necessity of florid embellishments. Am I understood, my young friend?

The Errand Boy (anxious to return to "Blood-Stained Bill"). Cert'nly, Guv'nor, 'ere y' are.

[Hands him a box containing the "Romeo and Juliet" brand, which should only be sold on the strength of a certificate signed by three Bishops and a Master in Lunacy. The Solicitor exits, and the Errand Boy returns to see what the Bandit does with the bus.]

Mary Jenkins (re-entering). 'Ere's my certificate, young man, and now I'll 'ave sixpenn'orth of that "Passionate Glow."

The Errand Boy (without looking up). Right! [Hands her the nearest box and puts the coppers in the till.]

[Exit MARY beamingly. Within a few seconds the door is opened hurriedly. Enter the Platonic-looking Official

excitedly, with the benevolent beard ruffled and in a terrible state of confusion.]

Official. EDWARD, have you served any customers since I've been away?

The Errand Boy (startled). Yes, Sir, two or three.

Official (wildly). Was there an elderly gentleman amongst the lot?

The Errand Boy. Yes, Sir.

Official (collapsing into a chair).

I thought so. I thought so. I saw an elderly idiot outside being asked by the apple-woman to fly with her. What did you sell him? You don't know? Well, whatever it was he opened it before the time, and (rushing to the door) there he goes, the police have got both! Oh my, there'll be trouble over this. Put up the shutters. I'm going home, and you'd better take your money and not come back. Oh, this is awful!

[Retires to inner room and writes out his resignation, while the Errand Boy mournfully puts up the shutters and wonders what "Blood-stained Bill" would have done under the circumstances. (Curtain.)]